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SUBJECT: FSC AUTUMN 2008 END-OF-ROUND: GEORGIA-RUSSIA WAR
REVERBERATES AS U.S. OBJECTIVES MET

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Recriminations from the August Georgia-Russia war echoed through the autumn session in the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), coloring Security Dialogue presentations and even reactions to an otherwise mundane decision describing the work of the Forum. Russia introduced a draft decision for an embargo of arms to Georgia but failed to gain support. Russia has warned it will return in 2009 to all the CSBM proposals it has made over the last two years, including those on naval forces, rapid reaction forces, and improved implementation of the Vienna Document.

¶2. (SBU) France will follow Finland into the FSC chair in January but has not made known in detail its priorities for the winter 2009 round. France is known to support further work to strengthen the existing OSCE political-military acquis, although it has also been supportive of greater engagement with Russia over the Medvedev proposals for a new European security architecture. Besides the cyber security workshop on March 17-18, a meeting to review the OSCE Document on SALW and supplementary decisions will also be held in 2009.

¶3. (SBU) U.S. goals for the autumn FSC session were met. Inter alia, this included maintaining Allied unity in refusing Russian entreaties to reopen OSCE documents or create new CSBMs and advancing implementation of UNSCR 1540, although progress on the 1540 Best Practice Guide is slower than anticipated. Allied unity was also conspicuous in the response to Russia's invasion of Georgia, with almost all ps supporting Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The U.S. often finds itself reacting to initiatives of others rather than leading. At an appropriate point, the U.S. may want to become more proactive in the FSC. Washington, see

para 29. End summary.

Georgia-Russia War

¶4. (SBU) Russia made good on its threat at the first meeting of the autumn round to focus on the August Georgia-Russia war, returning to it several times in the Security Dialogue and under General Statements in the FSC plenary. Russia charged Georgia with starting the war by an unprovoked invasion of South Ossetia and the indiscriminate bombardment of civilian targets in the region. Russia also alleged violations of the Code of Conduct for armed forces by Georgia and of OSCE documents on arms transfers by those states supplying Georgia.

¶5. (SBU) Georgia countered that Russian provocations over the years preceding had increased tensions in the region. The Georgian attack on South Ossetia was actually in response to the threatened or actual movement of Russian forces into the area.

¶6. (SBU) The U.S. and others called for both sides to observe the six-point cease-fire agreement and cooperate with the OSCE in restoring peace and stability to the region. The U.S., EU, and other pS reminded Russia of Georgia's right as a sovereign state to determine its defense requirements. The U.S. challenged Russia to explain how heavy weapons got into the hands of separatists in South Ossetia and Abkhazia and why this did not violate OSCE principles, including the OSCE

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Document on SALW and the OSCE Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers.

¶7. (SBU) Russia also sponsored a guest speaker in the Security Dialogue, Petr Litavrin, a deputy director from the Russian MFA security affairs and disarmament department, who warned that pS should not export arms to countries where they might be used for international aggression or domestic repression. Litavrin called for review of OSCE documents on SALW and arms transfers to enhance transparency and accountability in arms transfers.

¶8. (SBU) A Ministerial decision drafted by the FSC on the 2009 work plan (MC.DEC/13/08) was held up in the working group for several weeks because Russia and Georgia could not agree how to describe the ongoing FSC discussion over the August conflict. Georgia wanted a reference to a "Georgia-Russia" conflict, while Russia insisted this was insufficient as Georgia had started the war by attacking South Ossetia, which Russia then rescued.

¶9. (SBU) As part of its verbal skirmishing with Georgia, Russia also introduced a draft decision calling for an embargo of arms and military assistance to Georgia (FSC.DEL/155/08/Rev.1). Only Belarus supported the proposal, while it was successfully opposed by the U.S. and the EU.

CSBMs

¶10. (SBU) Russia attacked the U.S. for insisting that no substantive work on CSBMs in the FSC could occur while Russia had suspended implementation of the CFE treaty. Russia accused the U.S. of linking Russian initiatives in the FSC to "unrelated and secondary issues" like Georgia and the CFE. Russian proposals for naval CSBMs, rapid reaction forces information exchange, and notification of transits and deployments of brigades or larger have not appeared on the FSC agenda for several months, but Russia told the incoming FSC chair, France, that it intends to renew discussion of them in 2009. Russia has alluded to the Medvedev proposals for a new "European security architecture" in the FSC but has yet to elaborate.

Cyber Security

¶11. (SBU) Estonia sponsored the decision to hold a March 17-18, 2009 workshop on cyber security (FSC.DEC/10/08). The approved agenda and modalities (FSC.DEC/17/08) include discussion of state and terrorist cyber attacks and cyber crime. Russia, Germany, and the U.S. announced their intention to provide keynote speakers. Goals of the workshop include exchange of information on national priorities and showcasing potential defensive measures, lessons learned, and relevant best practices.

Vienna Document

¶12. (SBU) Russia revived its 2007 proposal for a single deadline of September 20 to submit defense planning information under the Vienna Document. The U.S. opposes the

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suggestion as impracticable and unnecessary given the differences among pS legislative calendars and procedures. Russia did not request further discussion of its Vienna Document-related proposals for specifying the area of inspection at 25,000 square kilometers (FSC.DEL/493/07/Rev.2) and requiring annual notification of at least one major military activity below the threshold for mandatory notification (FSC.DEL/495/07/Rev.3), although it recently told France, the incoming FSC chair, that it will push for their adoption in 2009.

Code of Conduct

¶13. (SBU) Work continued on an update of the Code of Conduct questionnaire. Despite numerous informal meetings and extensive discussion in the working group, consensus has not been reached, almost a year after work began after adoption of a decision to promote awareness and support outreach of the Code (FSC.DEC/1/08). Delegations remain deadlocked over draft questions on, inter alia, arms control and CSBMs, the role of gender in security affairs, and taking account of other states' security interests in defense planning.

¶14. (SBU) Proposals on "supplementary measures" to enhance implementation of the Code will be taken up in the winter 2009 session. Germany reportedly will offer a Food-for-Thought calling for annual review of Code implementation.

SALW/SCA

¶15. (SBU) A Ministerial decision (MC.DEC/11/08), drafted by the FSC, enjoins further work on SALW/SCA, specifically: review of the OSCE Document on SALW with a view to further action; implementation of a legal framework for brokering activities; conformance of national legal and administrative norms with the International tracing Instrument; implementation of the UN Program of Action to eliminate illicit trade of SALW. The decision also requires a progress report to the 2009 Ministerial on the implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA.

¶16. (SBU) Landmines and ERW: Germany offered a Food-for-Thought paper on landmines and explosive remnants of war that did not receive much comment. Germany is expected to introduce a draft decision based on the paper. The U.S. opposed any reference in the paper to the Ottawa Convention as a norm.

¶17. (SBU) UNPOA: Finland, as CiO and FSC chair, publicized the UN Program of Action (UNPOA) on small arms and light weapons (SALW) and encouraged delegations to help further its implementation. Finland also urged the FSC undertake the

assessment of all normative issues connected with SALW and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). Finland invited several NGOs to address the Security Dialogue on the UNPOA. Small Arms Survey, Saferworld, and GRIP called for more implementation of existing instruments, including the UNPOA, and more action on transparency in information exchanges, brokering, stockpile management, and marking and tracing.

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¶18. (SBU) Illicit air trafficking: The Forum adopted the Wassenaar Arrangement Best Practices "to prevent destabilizing transfers of SALW through air transport" and will hold an information exchange by June 30, 2009 on national practices in preventing the illicit transfer of SALW by air (FSC.DEC/11/08). The decision follows on the special FSC meeting workshop on the same subject held in 2007. the decision reflects a compromise among the drafters, including the U.S., who wanted a normative document but also wanted to import without alteration the Wassenaar Best Practices.

¶19. (SBU) End-use certificates: The Forum decided to task pS to exchange with other pS and the Conflict Prevention Center exemplars of their end-use certificates for transfer of SALW and other information on relevant verification procedures by March 27, 2009. U.S. goals were partly met as the decision solicits additional information, apart from the EUC itself, relevant to verification and the requirement for a CPC "analysis" was dropped.

¶20. (SBU) OSCE project work: Tenders have been invited on the OSCE melange project in Ukraine. The project would be the largest yet attempted by the OSCE, involving 16,000 tons of melange. The first phase of the projects envisions the elimination of 3,000 tons of melange at a budget of 3.1 million euros.

Best Practice Guides

¶21. (SBU) The OSCE published the "Handbook of Best Practices on Conventional Ammunition" in its six official languages.

¶22. (SBU) The Finnish-drafted "overview of disposal aspects for melange," earlier circulated as "Best Practice Guide" (BPG) was endorsed for publication.

¶23. (SBU) The U.S.-drafted UNSCR 1540 BPG chapter on export controls and transshipment is under revision in response to edits from Russia. A Canadian chapter on 1540-related physical security is also under revision. No other chapters are currently in preparation.

UNSCR 1540

¶24. (SBU) While work on the UNSCR 1540 Best Practice Guide continued, informal consultations with other delegations and the Secretariat indicate continued support for further work in implementation of the resolution. Possible follow-on could include a one-off information exchange on the state of national implementation efforts including national action plans.

¶25. (SBU) The U.S. 1540 coordinator led discussions with representatives of the OSCE Secretary General, the Border Management and Actions against Terrorism Units, and several national delegations on broadening the scope of 1540 work in Vienna to include the Permanent Council's Security Committee and other international organizations such as the IAEA and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. Russia announced that it prefers to keep 1540 work in the FSC and avoid the problem of "too many cooks."

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¶26. (SBU) Ambassador Jorge Urbina, the chair of the 1540 Committee, addressed the Security Dialogue of the role of the OSCE in furthering implementation of the resolution, including technical assistance and the development of sensitive goods export controls. Urbina, echoing the U.S. 1540 coordinator, supported broadening the scope of 1540 work within the OSCE and urged greater cooperation with other international organizations in Vienna.

Security Dialogue

¶27. (SBU) Beside the ongoing discussion of the Georgia-Russia war and others topics discussed elsewhere in this report, the Security Dialogue included a wide range of subjects including presentations of the OSCE's first-dimension normative and project work on Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the Arms Trade Treaty, the OSCE melange project in Ukraine, the Montreux Declaration on Private Military and Security Companies, the ODIHR "Handbook on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Armed Forces Personnel," and a proposed OSCE project for removing explosive remnants of war from the Crimea.

¶28. (SBU) U.S. presentations in the Security Dialogue included Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Thad Allen on maritime security capacity and international outreach programs, including anti-piracy measures, environmental protection, and maritime border management. Also, Major General Paul Schafer, USAF, director of strategy at U.S. European Command, explained the "strategy for active security," designed to defend the U.S. while creating an environment that supports the strategic interests of the U.S. and its allies and partners in Europe--including Russia.

RFG

¶29. (SBU) The French program for the 2009 winter round is largely unknown, although programming on UNSCR 1540 and air trafficking of SALW is expected. The OSCE cyber security workshop is to be held March 17-18 and the Forum has been directed by Ministerial decision (11/08) to hold a meeting to review the OSCE Document on SALW. Specific guidance will be required for both these meetings. Further guidance on next steps on UNSCR 1540, particularly if the focus of activity is to shift away from the FSC, is also needed. Updated guidance may be needed on Russian CSBM and Vienna Document-related proposals if Russia raises them again in the working groups.

The U.S. and Leadership of the FSC

¶30. (SBU) COMMENT: With the important exception of Georgia, the U.S. remained per instructions largely in a defensive position in the FSC this session. Particularly regarding setting norms through draft decisions, such as on SALW and related issues, the U.S. exercised influence mostly through criticism and revision of others' initiatives, and by exhortations to allies and partners to resist Russia's call to reopen existing documents or create "new" CSBMs. The only U.S.-initiated activity remains the effort to further

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implementation of UNSCR 1540 among pS. While U.S. support is always welcome, delegations increasingly turn to others, notably Germany and to a lesser degree France and the Nordics, for leadership and new ideas.

¶31. (SBU) (COMMENT contd) An assumption often stated by Russia and shared by many pS is that there should be more to the FSC than merely monitoring implementation and dialogue. At an appropriate point, the U.S. may want to proffer what that "more" could be and/or be more proactive in contributing

constructive ideas to improve initiatives by other states. Besides 1540, possible initiatives include outreach on MANPADS along the lines of the recent U.S. seminar in Vienna for Mediterranean Partners, enhancing export controls norms and enforcement for dual-use goods, and discussion of security and stabilization operations by multinational coalitions, including recent EU efforts. END COMMENT.

Next Meeting

¶32. (SBU) The first meeting of the 2009 winter session will be on January 21 with France in the chair.

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